

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Remington Products Co L L C

Connecticut State Technology Extension Program

Remington Products Company Shaves Away Waste

Client Profile:

Remington Products Company is a major international manufacturer and marketer of a wide variety of shaving and personal care appliances. The company employs 300 people at its Bridgeport, Connecticut location, which also serves as headquarters for this 65 year-old manufacturer's North American operations.

Situation:

Remington Products Company committed 95 of its shop floor employees to a series of lean awareness workshops conducted by the Connecticut State Technology Extension Program (CONNSTEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate. The workshop series teaches participants methods for reducing waste, increasing productivity, and improving process efficiency. Efforts to improve efficiency were directed at the foil cutter business unit, which manufactures elements that go into every Remington shaver and generates profits of over \$10 million annually.

Solution:

CONNSTEP worked with Remington to identify particular issues and inefficiencies in the company's operations. Remington specifically wanted to reduce inventory, improve quality, and decrease cycle time. After receiving initial training in the basic tenets of lean manufacturing, Remington's employees participated in a CONNSTEP-led value stream mapping exercise to identify specific areas of improvement. The teams implemented pull systems to reduce inventory, reduced set-up time and batch sizes, implemented visual controls, simplified paperwork, and initiated cross-training programs. Changes occurred in two departments--foil cutting and shaver trimmer--and yielded significant results, including such a significant reduction in energy consumption that Remington exceeded its projected energy savings. This project was partially subsidized by the Connecticut Department of Labor, which supports workforce development initiatives in the state.

Results:

Trained 99 percent of company employees.

Reduced foil cutter department work-in-process inventory from 16.4 days to 5 days.

Reduced foil cutter department total throughput days from 54 to 39.

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Reduced foil cutter department scrap and waste by 23 percent and inventory by 41 percent.

Increased foil cutter department productivity by 10 percent.

Reduced shaver trimmer department throughput time by 15 percent.

Reduced shaver trimmer department scrap and inventory by 20 percent.

Dramatically decreased rate of energy consumption.

Improved employee morale.

Testimonial:

"We sought and achieved a major transformation [with the help of the Connecticut State Technology Extension Program]. With training and involvement, you can see an increased degree of interest and confidence [from] our employees—things just click!"

Nestor Sgouros, Director of Manufacturing